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SUBJECT: GEORGIA--2009 TIP REPORT: PRESS GUIDANCE AND
DEMARCHE

REF: A. 2009 STATE 59732
[1](#)B. 2009 STATE 5577

[1](#)1. This is an action cable; see paras 5 through 7 and 10.

[1](#)2. On June 16, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. EDT, the Secretary will release the 2009 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report at a press conference in the Department's press briefing room. This release will receive substantial coverage in domestic and foreign news outlets. Until the time of the Secretary's June 16 press conference, any public release of the Report or country narratives contained therein is prohibited.

[1](#)3. The Department is hereby providing Post with advance press guidance to be used on June 16 or thereafter. Also provided is demarche language to be used in informing the Government of Georgia of its tier ranking and the TIP Report's imminent release. The text of the TIP Report country narrative is provided, both for use in informing the Government of Georgia and in any local media release by Post's public affairs section on June 16 or thereafter. Drawing on information provided below in paras 8 and 9, Post may provide the host government with the text of the TIP Report narrative no earlier than 1200 noon local time Monday June 15 for WHA, AF, EUR, and NEA countries and OOB local time Tuesday June 16 for SCA and EAP posts. Please note, however, that any public release of the Report's information should not precede the Secretary's release at 10:00 am EDT on June 16.

[1](#)4. The entire TIP Report will be available on-line at www.state.gov/g/tip shortly after the Secretary's June 16 release. Hard copies of the Report will be pouched to posts in all countries appearing on the Report. The Secretary's statement at the June 16 press event, and the statement of and fielding of media questions by G/TIP's Director and Senior Advisor to the Secretary, Ambassador-at-Large Luis CdeBaca, will be available on the Department's website shortly after the June 16 event. Ambassador de Baca will also hold a general briefing for officials of foreign embassies in Washington DC on June 17 at 3:30 pm EDT.

[1](#)5. Action Request: No earlier than 12 noon local time on Monday June 15 for WHA, AF, EUR, and NEA posts and OOB local time on Tuesday June 16 for SCA and EAP posts, please inform the appropriate official in the Government of Georgia of the June 16 release of the 2009 TIP Report, drawing on the points in para 9 (at Post's discretion) and including the text of the country narrative provided in para 8. For countries where the State Department has lowered the tier ranking, it is particularly important to advise governments prior to the Report being released in Washington on June 16.

[1](#)6. Action Request continued: Please note that, for those countries which will not receive an "action plan" with specific recommendations for improvement, posts should draw host governments' attention to the areas for improvement identified in the 2009 Report, especially highlighted in the "Recommendations" section of the second paragraph of the narrative text. This engagement is important to establishing the framework in which the government's performance will be

judged for the 2010 Report. If posts have questions about which governments will receive an action plan, or how they may follow up on the recommendations in the 2009 Report, please contact G/TIP and the appropriate regional bureau.

17. Action Request continued: On June 16, please be prepared to answer media inquiries on the Report's release using the press guidance provided in para 11. If Post wishes, a local press statement may be released on or after 10:30 am EDT June 16, drawing on the press guidance and the text of the TIP Report's country narrative provided in para 8.

18. Begin Final Text of Georgia's country narrative in the 2009 TIP Report:

Georgia (TIER 1)

Georgia is a source and transit country for women and girls trafficked within the country and to Turkey, the UAE, Greece, Russia, Germany, and Austria for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation. Women and girls from Ukraine, Moldova, Russia, and other former Soviet states are trafficked through Georgia to Turkey, the UAE, and Western Europe. Men and women are trafficked within Georgia for the purpose of forced labor. Men and women in the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which were outside of the government's control, are trafficked for the purpose of forced labor. The Government of Georgia fully complies with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The government significantly increased its victim assistance funding to \$250,000 and modestly increased the number of victims assisted by government-funded programs. Moreover, all convicted trafficking offenders were given adequate prison sentences.

Recommendation for Georgia: Sustain funding for victim assistance programs; increase the number of victims identified and assisted; ensure that victims are not fined or otherwise penalized for unlawful acts they may have committed as a direct result of being trafficked; and continue strong efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict both labor and sex trafficking offenders.

Prosecution

The Government of Georgia demonstrated adequate law enforcement efforts during the reporting period. Georgia prohibits all forms of trafficking in persons through its Law on the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons, adopted in April 2006, which prescribes penalties ranging from 7 to 20 years' imprisonment. These penalties are sufficiently stringent and are commensurate with those for other grave crimes, such as rape. In 2008, the government investigated 14 trafficking cases, compared to 37 investigations in 2007. Authorities prosecuted 10 individuals for sex trafficking, compared to a total of 18 individuals prosecuted in 2007. All 10 convicted trafficking offenders were sentenced to time in prison; none received a suspended sentence. The average sentence was 14 to 15 years' imprisonment; two convicted traffickers were sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment in 2008. There were no reports of trafficking-related complicity of law enforcement personnel from either NGOs or the government.

Protection

Georgia maintained its adequate victim assistance efforts over the reporting period. The government provided \$150,000 in funding for the support of two trafficking shelters that provided full victim assistance, including medical aid, psychological counseling, and legal assistance; victim assistance was not conditional upon cooperating with law enforcement. The government continued to implement a formal mechanism for its officials to identify and refer victims for assistance. The government and IOM identified 21 victims in 2008, a significant drop from 48 trafficking victims

identified in 2007. The government provided shelter and comprehensive assistance to 10 victims, compared to 12 victims in 2007. The government also provided one-time compensation payments of \$600 to five trafficking victims in 2008. Georgia provided legal alternatives to the removal of foreign victims to countries where they would face hardship or retribution. Victims were encouraged to assist law enforcement with trafficking investigations and prosecutions; 15 victims assisted law enforcement during the reporting period. Generally victims were not penalized for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being trafficked.

Prevention

Georgia maintained efforts to prevent trafficking through public awareness campaigns and outreach activities, including meetings with university students, journalists, and ethnic minority representatives. The government distributed approximately 300,000 trafficking-awareness pamphlets at border crossings over the reporting period. The government continued efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts through awareness campaigns that highlighted Georgia's law that punishes clients who benefit from the services of trafficking victims.

19. Post may wish to deliver the following points, which offer technical and legal background on the TIP Report process, to the host government as a non-paper with the above TIP Report country narrative:

(begin non-paper)

-- The U.S. Congress, through its passage of the 2000 Trafficking Victims Protection Act, as amended (TVPA), requires the Secretary of State to submit an annual Report to Congress. The goal of this Report is to stimulate action and create partnerships around the world in the fight against modern-day slavery. The USG approach to combating human trafficking follows the TVPA and the standards set forth in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (commonly known as the "Palermo Protocol"). The TVPA and the Palermo Protocol recognize that this is a crime in which the victims' labor or services (including in the "sex industry") are obtained or maintained through force, fraud, or coercion, whether overt or through psychological manipulation. While much attention has focused on international flows, both the TVPA and the Palermo Protocol focus on the exploitation of the victim, and do not require a showing that the victim was moved.

-- Recent amendments to the TVPA removed the requirement that only countries with a "significant number" of trafficking victims be included in the Report. Beginning with the 2009 TIP Report, countries determined to be a country of origin, transit, or destination for victims of severe forms of trafficking are included in the Report and assigned to one of three tiers. Countries assessed as meeting the "minimum standards for the elimination of severe forms of trafficking" set forth in the TVPA are classified as Tier 1. Countries assessed as not fully complying with the minimum standards, but making significant efforts to meet those minimum standards are classified as Tier 2. Countries assessed as neither complying with the minimum standards nor making significant efforts to do so are classified as Tier 3.

-- The TVPA also requires the Secretary of State to provide a "Special Watch List" to Congress later in the year. Anti-trafficking efforts of the countries on this list are to be evaluated again in an Interim Assessment that the Secretary of State must provide to Congress by February 1 of each year. Countries are included on the "Special Watch List" if they move up in "tier" rankings in the annual TIP Report -- from 3 to 2 or from 2 to 1 -- or if they have been

placed on the Tier 2 Watch List.

-- Tier 2 Watch List consists of Tier 2 countries determined: (1) not to have made "increasing efforts" to combat human trafficking over the past year; (2) to be making significant efforts based on commitments of anti-trafficking reforms over the next year, or (3) to have a very significant number of trafficking victims or a significantly increasing victim population. As indicated in reftel B, the TVPRA of 2008 contains a provision requiring that a country that has been included on Tier 2 Watch List for two consecutive years after the date of enactment of the TVPRA of 2008 be ranked as Tier 3. Thus, any automatic downgrade to Tier 3 pursuant to this provision would take place, at the earliest, in the 2011 TIP Report (i.e., a country would have to be ranked Tier 2 Watch List in the 2009 and 2010 Reports before being subject to Tier 3 in the 2011 Report). The new law allows for a waiver of this provision for up to two additional years upon a determination by the President that the country has developed and devoted sufficient resources to a written plan to make significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with the minimum standards.

-- Countries classified as Tier 3 may be subject to statutory restrictions for the subsequent fiscal year on non-humanitarian and non-trade-related foreign assistance and, in some circumstances, withholding of funding for participation by government officials or employees in educational and cultural exchange programs. In addition, the President could instruct the U.S. executive directors to international financial institutions to oppose loans or other utilization of funds (other than for humanitarian, trade-related or certain types of development assistance) with respect to countries on Tier 3. Countries classified as Tier 3 that take strong action within 90 days of the Report's release to show significant efforts against trafficking in persons, and thereby warrant a reassessment of their Tier classification, would avoid such sanctions. Guidelines for such actions are in the DOS-crafted action plans to be shared by Posts with host governments.

-- The 2009 TIP Report, issuing as it does in the midst of the global financial crisis, highlights high levels of trafficking for forced labor in many parts of the world and systemic contributing factors to this phenomenon: fraudulent recruitment practices and excessive recruiting fees in workers' home countries; the lack of adequate labor protections in both sending and receiving countries; and the flawed design of some destination countries' "sponsorship systems" that do not give foreign workers adequate legal recourse when faced with conditions of forced labor. As the May 2009 ILO Global Report on Forced Labor concluded, forced labor victims suffer approximately \$20 billion in losses, and traffickers' profits are estimated at \$31 billion. The current global financial crisis threatens to increase the number of victims of forced labor and increase the associated "cost of coercion."

-- The text of the TVPA and amendments can be found on website www.state.gov/g/tip.

-- On June 16, 2009, the Secretary of State will release the ninth annual TIP Report in a public event at the State Department. We are providing you an advance copy of your country's narrative in that report. Please keep this information embargoed until 10:00 am Washington DC time June 16. The State Department will also hold a general briefing for officials of foreign embassies in Washington DC on June 17 at 3:30 pm EDT.

(end non-paper)

10. Posts should make sure that the relevant country narrative is readily available on or through the Mission's web page in English and appropriate local language(s) as soon as possible after the TIP Report is released. Funding for translation costs will be handled as it was for the Human Rights Report. Posts needing financial assistance for

translation costs should contact their regional bureau's EX office.

¶11. The following is press guidance provided for Post to use with local media.

Q1: Why was Georgia given a rank of Tier 1?

A: The Government of Georgia fully complies with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.

Q2: What progress has Georgia made in the past year?

A: The government significantly increased its victim assistance funding to \$250,000 and modestly increased the number of victims assisted by government-funded programs. The government provided \$150,000 in funding for the support of two trafficking shelters that provided full victim assistance, including medical aid, psychological counseling, and legal assistance; victim assistance was not conditional upon cooperating with law enforcement. The government continued to implement a formal mechanism for its officials to identify and refer victims for assistance. Moreover, all convicted trafficking offenders were given adequate prison sentences.

Q3: What can Georgia do to improve its fight against trafficking in persons?

A: To improve its anti-trafficking performance, the Georgian government could: sustain funding for victim assistance programs; increase the number of victims identified and assisted; ensure that victims are not fined or otherwise penalized for unlawful acts they may have committed as a direct result of being trafficked; and continue strong efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict both labor and sex trafficking offenders.

Q4: What sources does the State Department use for information?

A: The Department of State prepared this Report using information from U.S. embassies, foreign government officials, NGOs and international organizations, published reports, research trips to every region, and information submitted to tipreport@state.gov.

¶12. The Department appreciates posts' assistance with the preceding action requests.

CLINTON